

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16783 041804Z

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TAGS: PFOR, TSPA, UR

SUBJ: SPACE AGREEMENT: APOLLO-SOYUZ PROJECT: LIVE COVERAGE

REF: A. BONN 16886, B. MOSCOW 16406, C. STATE 239066

1. I CALLED ON ACADEMICIAN KELDYSH AT NOON NOV. 4 AND CONVEYED TO HIM IN DETAIL TALKING POINTS RE PRESS COVERAGE OF ASTP LAUNCH PROVIDED FOR SECRETARY'S VISIT.

2. KELDYSH'S REACTION WAS POLITELY BUT FIRMLY NEGATIVE THROUGHOUT. HE STATED THAT THERE WAS NO RULE OR CUSTOM THAT WOULD PERMIT FOREIGN JOURNALISTS TO VISIT BAIKONUR. HERETOFORE NOT EVEN FOREIGN SPECIALISTS HAD BEEN ADMITTED BUT AN EXCEPTION HAD BEEN MADE IN THIS REGARD FOR ASTP BECAUSE IT WAS FELT THAT THEIR PRESENCE WOULD CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO PROJECT. HE DID NOT SEE THAT THE PRESENCE OF CORRESPONDENTS WOULD MAKE SUCH CONTIRBUTION.

3. WHEN PRESSED FOR RECONSIDERATION, KELDYSH REFERRED TO TERMS OF INITIALED PUBLIC INFORMATION PLAN WHICH STATE THAT COVERAGE SHOULD BE ACCORDING TO PRACTICES OF EACH COUNTRY AND STATED HIS OPINION THAT RECONSIDERATION COULD ONLY TAKE PLACE AT A FURTHER MEETING OF PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALISTS OF BOTH SIDES, AND THAT HE DID NOT SEE ANY REVISION

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 16783 041804Z

PERMITTING COVERAGE AT BAIKONUR EMERGING FROM

SUCH MEETINGS.

4. IF AMERICAN NEWS AGENCIES WERE COMPLAINING OF LACK OF RECIPROCITY, KELDYSH RESPONDED, THEN SOVIET CORRESPONDENTS WOULD NOT GO TO APOLLO LAUNCH SITE.

5. FACED WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT SHORT OF BAIKONUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS MIGHT BE ADMITTED TO SPACE CONTROL CENTER OUTSIDE MOSCOW, KELDYSH REITERATED HE SAW NO POSITIVE BENEFIT TO BE GAINED FROM THEIR PRESENCE, ADDING THAT THEY WOULD GET "ALL THEY NEEDED" AT HOTEL PRESS CENTER.

6. THERE WAS NO FLEXIBILITY WHATSOEVER IN KELDYSH'S POSITION AND HIS CLOSING REMARK THAT HE WOULD THINK OVER WHAT I HAD SAID WAS CLEARLY A CONCESSION TO POLITENESS RATHER THAN A STATEMENT OF INTENTION.

7. DR. V.S. VERESHCHETIN OF INTERCOSMOS AND FOREIGN RELATIONS CHIEF KORNEYEV WERE PRESENT FOR SOVIET SIDE. I WAS ACCCOMPANIED BY ACTING SCIENCE COUNSELOR AND THE PRESS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNSELOR. LATTER CALLED SUBSEQUENTLY ON CHIEF OF MID PRESS DIVISION SOFINSKIY TO PRESENT SAME POINTS. SOFINSKIY WAS MORE UNDERSTANDING OF POSITION OF AMERICAN PRESS, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WAS A SHARED PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEM AND VOLUNTEERED TO DISCUSS SOLUTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY, BUT EXPRESSED LITTLE OPTIMISM THAT A CHANGE IN THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE'S POSITION MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING.

8. COMMENT: I DO NOT HAVE PRACTICAL EXPECTATIONS OF POSITIVE RESULTS FOLLOWING FROM THESE DEMARCHE. IF WE WISH TO CONTINUE TO WITHHOLD THE LOW/KELDYSH LETTER AND SIGNED PROTOCOL, OUR ONLY OPTION WOULD SEEM TO BE TO RAISE THE MATTER AT A HIGHER LEVEL AT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY.

STOESSEL

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